Racism has become an essential part of the Republican Party's election strategy.

by Mick Youther

Racism is not only alive and well in America, it has become an essential part of the Republican Party's election strategy.

• "[In the 2000 election] tens of thousands of eligible Florida voters were wrongly prevented from casting their ballots--some purged from the voter registries and others blocked from registering in the first instance. Nearly all were Democrats, nearly half of them African-American."-- *Gregory Palast, The Nation, 1/18/01* (Bush "won" by only 537 votes.)

• "Supposedly, these were convicted felons forbidden to vote in Florida, but 90% of them turned out to be innocent of any crime--except perhaps Voting While Black."-- *Jim Hightower's Lowdown, 4/5/03*

The only reason this Republican voting rip-off was exposed in the 2000 Florida election was because of the intense scrutiny brought on by the close Presidential race. If you don't believe they are doing the same thing all across the nation for the 2004 election, I have a bridge I'd like to sell you.

• "If we do not suppress the Detroit vote, we're going to have a tough time in this election cycle."--- *State Rep. John Pappageorge (R-Troy), at a meeting of the Oakland County Republican Party, Detroit Free Press, 7/16/04*

• "…Republican poll watchers in Arkansas reportedly drove away voters in predominantly black precincts by taking photos and improperly demanding identification during pre-election day balloting in 2002. Recent reports of voter suppression tactics also came from Louisiana, New Jersey, South Carolina, and several other states."-- *GayToday, 5/25/03*

• "A nationwide review reveals a disturbing pattern in closely contested states of Republican office-holders with close ties to the Bush-Cheney campaign: Remove eligible voters from official rolls and erect barriers to new or young voters and minorities who vote overwhelmingly Democratic."-- *Hans Johnson In These Times, 8/20/04*

• "The GOP election workers, most of whom live outside the targeted precincts in western and central Louisville, Portland and Newburg, will be on hand to challenge voters who they suspect aren't eligible. …'(They) have only one purpose: to intimidate and suppress votes in the West End and other minority areas,' Tim Longmeyer, chairman of the Jefferson County Democratic Party, said during a news conference yesterday"--- *The Courier-Journal (Louisville, KY), 10/23/03*

• "This is the endgame strategy the Republican Party has decided to utilize, rather than positive strategies. They are strategizing, 'How can we get those folks we don't care about from going to the polls?'"-- *Rep. Alexander Lipsey (D-Kalamazoo), Detroit Free Press, 7/21/04*

Because a high percentage of African Americans vote Democratic, they are an easily identifiable target for voter suppression. Every time Republicans can prevent an African American from registering, or voting, or having their vote counted—there is a good chance that they have eliminated a vote for the Democrats. This has got to stop.

• **“The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was specifically enacted to prevent voter intimidation and suppression. A violation of the act constitutes a felony. The act imposes severe penalties on those who try to disrupt the democratic process, as well it should.”**-- *Detroit Free Press, 7/2704*

• **“…we're not just going to sit there and wait for it to happen. On Election Day in your cities, my campaign will provide teams of election observers and lawyers to monitor elections, and we will enforce the law.”**-- *John Kerry at the N.A.A.C.P. convention in Philadelphia on Thursday, quoted in the New York Times, 7/19/04*

• **“…more than 60 nonprofit groups have banded together to form a ‘Voter Protection Coalition.’ The group is planning to have 25,000 volunteers -- including 5,000 lawyers -- staff Election Day hotlines, videotape polls and go to court if necessary.”**-- *Jo Becker, Washington Post8/26/04*

• **“America's Families United, a racial-justice advocacy group that is registering thousands of people, has set up a "voter protection project" to ensure that its new registrants make it onto the rolls, by comparing each new voter list to its own list.”**-- *New York Times, 7/19/04*

While George W. Bush speaks of patriotism and democracy, his party conspires to systematically deny African American citizens’ their most basic right—the right to vote. This is not a racism born of ignorance or culture. This is a premeditated racism, designed to illegally deny the vote to as many democrats as possible. This is definitely not the Republican Party of Lincoln.

• **“Four decades ago, the opposition to the civil right to vote was easy to identify: night riders wearing white sheets and burning crosses. Today, the threat comes from partisan politicians wearing pinstripe suits and clutching laptops.”**-- *Martin Luther King III and Greg Palast, The Baltimore Sun, 5/8/03*

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If they can take the vote away from one group, they can take it from you. We need to help protect everyone's right to vote. You can email your comments to Mick@interventionmag.com